



City of Malibu News

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CITY OF MALIBU APPROVES PLAN TO LIMIT COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND PROVIDE MAJOR ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH IMPROVEMENTS

The plan now goes to Malibu Voters in November

Malibu, California (July 29, 2003) – The Malibu City Council unanimously approved a plan last night that would limit commercial development, provide the city with a state-of-the-art urgent care center, a community center, create new public open space, and parks and trails for Malibu visitors. The plan also allows the city to explore options for creating a wastewater reclamation facility and storm runoff retention system that would significantly benefit the environment.

After months of honing the agreement, which included negotiating with current property owners, the Malibu Bay Company (MBC), numerous public hearings to vet concerns and gather suggestions from Malibu residents, community activists, and environmental groups, the council agreed this was the best plan to put before voters this November.

“We believe this agreement sets the best course for the environmental health and safety of the city and for the coastline,” said Malibu Mayor Ken Kearsley. “This plan will help clean up the Malibu Creek, Lagoon and Surfrider Beach because it will further limit the amount of development in the Civic Center area and allow room instead for parks, trails and open space. Limiting commercial development helps reduce urban runoff and contaminants, reduces traffic and air quality degradation. But ultimately, it’s up to the people of Malibu. They have had an active role in refining this agreement and we want the people who live here to decide what is best for their city and they’ll get that chance in November.”

Council member and Mayor Pro-tem Sharon Barovsky summed it up best by saying, “This agreement gives us the opportunity to cut back a tremendous amount of development that the Bay Company would

otherwise be entitled to under the law and it also provides desperately needed public benefits like an endowed urgent care facility, ball fields, open space, park land, trails and a community center. Perhaps most important, it offers the city a chance to address the pollution that effects our lagoon and Surfrider Beach. Without the agreement, the Bay Company will develop their property, and the city will get nothing.”

California state officials and environmental groups alike herald the council’s decision as a monumental shift in the way Malibu will address environmental health issues. In a letter to the city, California State Resources Agency Secretary Mary Nichols hailed the wastewater reclamation facility and storm runoff retention system as, “the best chance of improving and protecting water quality and flows to the watershed.” Nichols added, “We believe that efforts to improve the treatment and reuse of waste water at the base of the watershed in the Civic Center will make a substantial contribution to more normal flow regimes and better water quality in the creek, lagoon and public beaches.”

Regional Water Quality Control Board Chairperson Susan Cloke described Malibu's efforts as a major step in the right direction noting, "The Regional Board has long been concerned about the water quality in Malibu Lagoon, the creek, Surfrider Beach and the ocean, all of which are impacted by pollution, especially from high levels of unhealthful bacteria. In the Civic Center area, where existing individual septic systems have less than 10 feet of separation from groundwater, the data demonstrate the strong potential for contamination of ground water, as well as the subsequent leaching of those contaminants to the Lagoon and the ocean. A wastewater treatment plan, including water elements, designed to the highest environmental standards, for the Civic Center area of Malibu, has the opportunity to create the much needed and long overdue water quality protections. The Regional Board supports the City in its work to find sound environmental solutions for the future."

The Malibu Bay Company (MBC) currently owns the Civic Center property under consideration as the site of the wastewater facility. The company has agreed to sell this property to the city under the terms outlined in last night’s council meeting. If approved, the City’s plan will eliminate 155,000 square feet of available commercial development on the Chili Cook-off site and proposes instead, a 105,000 square foot development on the Point Dume Mesa. The agreement also provides \$2.5 million dollars for urgent care endowment and construction of sports fields, \$60,000 dollars for a wetlands feasibility study, a conservation easement for restoration of Trancas Creek, public trails and construction of a 5,000 square foot community center at Point Dume.

The City of Malibu was incorporated on March 28, 1991. Located in Northwest Los Angeles County, the City has 21 miles of coastline along the Pacific Ocean and a population of 12,575.

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